

Species	March	April	May	Total
Curlew	72	—	—	72
<i>Numenius arquata arquata</i> (Linnæus)	—	—	—	—
Common Tern	—	—	65	65
<i>Sterna hirundo hirundo</i> Linnæus	—	—	—	—
Stock Dove	50	8	—	58
<i>Columba ænas</i> Linnæus	—	—	—	—
Golden Plover	44	6	—	50
<i>Charadrius apricarius</i> Linnæus	—	—	—	—
Siskin	15	30	—	45
<i>Carduelis spinus</i> (Linnæus)	—	—	—	—
Herring Gull	40	—	—	40
<i>Larus argentatus argentatus</i> Pontoppidan	—	—	—	—
Wood Lark	16	20	—	36
<i>Lullula arborea arborea</i> (Linnæus)	—	—	—	—
White fronted Goose	35	—	—	35
<i>Anser albifrons</i> (Scopoli)	—	—	—	—
Brent Goose	29	4	—	33
<i>Branta bernicla</i> (Linnæus)	—	—	—	—
Little Tern	—	27	—	27
<i>Sterna albifrons albifrons</i> Pallas	—	—	—	—
Redwing	7	18	—	25
<i>Turdus musicus</i> Linnæus	—	—	—	—
Carriion Crow	13	12	—	25
<i>Corvus corone corone</i> Linnæus	—	—	—	—
Fieldfare	20	1	—	21
<i>Turdus pilaris</i> Linnæus	—	—	—	—
Blackbird	18	2	—	20
<i>Turdus merula merula</i> Linnæus	—	—	—	—
Whooper Swan	20	—	—	20
<i>Cygnus cygnus</i> (Linnæus)	—	—	—	—
Brambling	20	—	—	20
<i>Fringilla montifringilla</i> Linnæus	—	—	—	—
Common Gull	—	20	—	20
<i>Larus canus</i> Linnæus	—	—	—	—
Honey Buzzard	—	—	20	20
<i>Pernis apivorus</i> (Linnæus)	—	—	—	—
Reed Bunting	16	3	—	19
<i>Emberiza schœniclus schœniclus</i> (Linnæus)	—	—	—	—
Grey Plover	2	—	16	18
<i>Charadrius squatarola</i> (Linnæus)	—	—	—	—
Magpie	3	13	—	16
<i>Pica pica pica</i> (Linnæus)	—	—	—	—
Heron	5	10	—	15
<i>Ardea cinerea</i> Linnæus)	—	—	—	—
Sparrow Hawk	3	10	—	13
<i>Accipiter nisus nisus</i> (Linnæus)	—	—	—	—
Snipe	12	—	—	12
<i>Capella gallinago gallinago</i> (Linnæus)	—	—	—	—
Song Thrush	12	—	—	12
<i>Turdus ericetorum philomelus</i> Brehm	—	—	—	—
Goldfinch	2	6	4	14
<i>Carduelis carduelis carduelis</i> (Linnæus)	—	—	—	—
Tree Pipit	—	—	10	10
<i>Anthus trivialis trivialis</i> (Linnæus)	—	—	—	—
Black Tern	—	—	7	7
<i>Chlidonias niger niger</i> (Linnæus)	—	—	—	—
Greenland Wheatear	—	5	—	5
<i>Oenanthe oenanthe leucorhoa</i> (Gmelin)	—	—	—	—

Species	March	April	May	Total
Shelduck	—	5	—	5
<i>Tadorna tadorna</i> (Linnæus)	—	—	—	—
Goosander	5	—	—	5
<i>Mergus merganser</i> Linnæus	—	—	—	—
Hen Harrier	1	3	—	4
<i>Circus cyaneus cyaneus</i> (Linnæus)	—	—	—	—
Snow Bunting	3	—	—	3
<i>Plectrophenax nivalis nivalis</i> (Linnæus)	—	—	—	—
Redshank	1	1	1	3
<i>Tringa totanus</i> (Linnæus)	—	—	—	—
Kestrel	—	3	—	3
<i>Falco tinnunculus tinnunculus</i> Linnæus)	—	—	—	—
Marsh Harrier	—	3	—	3
<i>Circus æruginosus æruginosus</i> (Linnæus)	—	—	—	—
Common Snadpiper	—	3	3	3
<i>Tringa hypoleucos</i> Linnæus	—	—	—	—
Ruff	—	3	—	3
<i>Philomachus pugnax</i> (Linnæus)	—	—	—	—
Gulled-billed Tern	—	—	2	2
<i>Gelocchidon nilotica nilotica</i> (Gmelin)	—	—	—	—
Spotted Flycatcher	—	—	2	2
<i>Muscicapa striata striata</i> (Pallas)	—	—	—	—
Merlin	—	1	1	2
<i>Falco columbarius æsalon</i> Turnstall	—	—	—	—
Hawfinch	2	—	—	2
<i>Coccothraustes coccothraustes coccothraustes</i> (Linnæus)	—	—	—	—
Mallard	2	—	—	2
<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i> Linnæus	—	—	—	—
Great Tit	1	1	—	2
<i>Parus major major</i> Linnæus	—	—	—	—
Robin	1	—	—	1
<i>Erithacus rubecula rubecula</i> (Linnæus)	—	—	—	—
Kingfisher	1	—	—	1
<i>Alcedo atthis ispida</i> Linnæus	—	—	—	—
Rock Pipit	1	—	—	1
<i>Anthus spinoletta</i> (Linnæus)	—	—	—	—
Red-throated Diver	1	—	—	1
<i>Colymbus stellatus</i> Pontoppidan	—	—	—	—
Sc.Lesser Black-backed Gull	—	1	—	1
<i>Larus fuscus fuscus</i> Linnæus	—	—	—	—
Goshawk	—	1	1	1
<i>Accipiter gentilis gentilis</i> (Linnæus)	—	—	—	—
Peregrine	—	1	—	1
<i>Falco peregrinus peregrinus</i> Tunstall	—	—	—	—
Wheatear	—	1	—	1
<i>Oenanthe ænanthe ænanthe</i> (Linnæus)	—	—	—	—
Green Sandpiper	—	1	—	1
<i>Tringa ocropus</i> Linnæus	—	—	—	—
Chiff-chaff	—	1	—	1
<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i> (Vieillot)	—	—	—	—
Greenshank	—	1	—	1
<i>Tringa nebularia</i> (Gunnerus)	—	—	—	—
Black tailed Godwit	—	1	—	1
<i>Limosa limosa limosa</i> (Linnæus)	—	—	—	—

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On Two New Races and an Undescribed Variety from the Tristan da Cunha Group

By MR. H. F. I. ELLIOTT.

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Although the few resident land birds of Tristan da Cunha and its associated islands derive from South America (to which continent the avifauna should certainly be referred rather than as formerly to the Ethiopian region), it is clear that those species which have established

themselves have, in the absence of competition, food shortages or climatic extremes, become very sedentary. Of over 100 thrushes *Nesocichla eremita* (Gould) ringed at the landing-place on Nightingale Island only one, in the course of a year's observation, was found to have wandered any distance and then only a matter of 300 yards. In consequence it is not surprising that the populations inhabiting the various islands and islets of the group exhibit divergences.

Most of the forms which have evolved have been recognized and described, and doubts which have sometimes been expressed as to their validity and constancy are unjustified. They can in fact all be readily distinguished in the field, even in the absence of direct comparison, by characteristic behaviour as well as appearance. In two cases, only, differences have hitherto escaped notice. One of these can probably never be verified. It has always been assumed that the smaller bunting of Inaccessible Island is identical with *Nesospiza acunhæ acunhæ* (Cabanis), of the main island of Tristan, now extinct. This for the reasons indicated above is most improbable, but only a single specimen of the extinct race is known to exist (in the Berlin Museum: see Stresemann, Ibis, 95, 1953: 146-147), which I have not yet had an opportunity of examining. In the other case it has been mistakenly supposed that the thrush of Nightingale Island is identical with the race described from Inaccessible, *Nesocichla eremita gordonii* (Stenhouse). It is in fact distinct and I propose:

Nesocichla eremita procax subsp. nov.

Description: Sexes alike, though ♂ averages slightly larger in all races. Differs from *N. e. eremita* of Tristan in being larger (e.g. wing 112 to 119 against 100 to 110, culmen usually 24 or 25 against 21 or 22), the much darker and also more rufous tone of the plumage (the paler areas on wing coverts and inner webs of the primaries being tawny red not buff), and the paler (more brown less blackish) bill and feet. Differs from *N. e. gordonii* of Inaccessible, which is intermediate in size (wing 108 to 117, culmen usually 22 or 23), in being larger on the average in all dimensions, having a pale grey tinge suffusing the buff of the underside, which is also more heavily spotted and streaked with dark brown especially on the flanks, and in having the primary coverts more uniformly tawny red.

Distribution: Nightingale Island, South Atlantic.

Type: ad. ♂ Nightingale. 11th April 1950. Wing 119. No. 966 in my collection, now in the British Museum. *Co-type*. ad. ♀ Nightingale. 10th July 1951. Wing 112. My No. 1028 in the same collection.

General: The name is intended to denote the extreme tameness and impudence of this race compared with the other two. Further distinctions are that the normal clutch seems to be 3 in this race, 2 in the others, and that the eggs are larger (average of 10: 33.5 x 22.7; average of 4 eggs of *N. e. gordonii* 29.5 x 22).

The isolation of Tristan da Cunha might be expected to have had less effect on the breeding populations of sea-birds. Nevertheless a comparatively

large number of local forms have evolved. Most of these have been recognized and described, doubts as to their validity being in most cases removed by examination of adequate material. Thus the local races of *Eudyptes cristatus*, *Puffinus assimilis*, *Procellaria æquinoctialis*, *Pelecanoides urinatrix*, *Catharacta skua* and *Sterna vittata* are all "good"; those of *Diomedea exulans* and *Fregetta grallaria* somewhat more doubtfully so; and only the local population of *Pachyptila forsteri*, among those generally recognized, having no reliable distinctions (the criteria given in Mathews's description being if anything the exact reverse of the truth).

I suspect that in the differentiation of the species mentioned, there is a correlation with the extent to which the population concerned is prone to wander from its breeding station. For instance the distinctive ring-eyed form of the Cape Hen, *Procellaria æquinoctialis conspicillata* (Gould), is found in its burrows on Inaccessible Island in April, May and June, in the very middle of the non-breeding period, while the notable long-tailed Tristan race of the Antarctic Tern, *Sterna vittata triantaniensis* Murphy, is present in the islands throughout the year. Murphy and Harper's review of the Diving-Petrels, *Pelecanoides* (Bull. Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist., 1921; 44, art. 17: 495-554), and subsequent work on the genus, indicates that it is peculiarly liable to divergences of form in each of its breeding stations, and it therefore seems significant that the Tristan race, *P. urinatrix dacunhæ* Nicoll, was recorded in the vicinity in all months except July and August (a time of year when observations at Tristan are in any case difficult to maintain).

It has always been assumed that the Diving-Petrel of Gough Island is also referable to *P. urinatrix dacunhæ*, but the 250 miles of sea and latitude, which separate this outlying member of the Tristan group from the other islands, seem to have isolated that Gough population sufficiently for differentiation to occur. The British Museum had one specimen taken in June 1927 (again the middle of the non-breeding season), but another secured in February, 1952, (when numbers of these birds were attracted by the lights of a fishing trawler anchored just off the Gough beaches) agrees in showing the same divergences from the good series of *P. u. dacunhæ* now available. I propose:

Pelecanoides urinatrix elizabethæ subsp. nov.

Description: Differs from the neighbouring *P. urinatrix dacunhæ* of Tristan in the shape of the bill, which is broader with a shorter and blunter unfeathered inter-ramal space, the brown shafts of the feathers of the neck and jugulum are less conspicuous, but the flanks considerably greyer; from typical *P. u. urinatrix* of New Zealand waters differs in being smaller (wing 113 against 119, tail 35-38 against 39-41) and in the dark shafts of the neck feathers; from *P. u. berardi* of the Falklands (which has wing 122) differs in being smaller, but broader-billed and darker on throat and flanks; and from *P. u. coppingeri* of South America, to which it is very similar in size, in having a broader bill and dark neck and flanks. *P. exsul* of Kerguelen and Marion is larger (wing 122, tail 39-43) and has a considerably broader and deeper bill.

Distribution : Gough Island, South Atlantic.

Type : ad. ♂ Gough. 23rd February 1952. Wing 113. No. 1066 in my collection, now in the British Museum.

General : Named after my wife, who is I believe the first woman ever to have landed on Gough Island and accompanied me on my explorations there.

One other form of sea-bird which does not seem to have been described, was discovered nesting in small numbers on the precipices immediately above the settlement of Edinburgh on the main island of Tristan. On the evidence available this would seem simply to be a dark form of the Soft-plumaged Petrel, *Pterodroma mollis mollis* (Gould), a variety upon the existence of which considerable doubts have been expressed by some authorities. It is true that a specimen in the British Museum captured at sea in lat. 36deg.S., long. 88deg.55min.E., is labelled *mollis* (dark form), and agrees generally in dimensions with that species. But there are no other data on the label except a recent note by Murphy that the specimen may in fact be *Pterodroma ultima*.

With regard to the four specimens of the undescribed form secured on Tristan (three of which are now in the British Museum), the salient fact is that whereas the normal type of *P. mollis* is still found breeding in large numbers on Gough Island and rather sparsely on Nightingale and Inaccessible Islands, all the examples of a petrel of the same dimensions found breeding at the same time of year and in the same type of burrow on the main island of Tristan were found to be dark birds of the same general form. The colour of the soft parts is identical (feet: tarsus and one third of inner toe and web and streak at apex of outer web pale flesh, remainder dusky black). The only distinctions are in the colour of plumage and may be summarized as follows:

Pterodroma mollis mollis dark form

Description : Differs from light form in being sooty-grey not blue-grey above (very close in tone to the grey of *Pterodroma brevirostris* Lesson); the outer tail feathers are uniformly dark and not freckled with white; there are some dark rufous margins to the feathers of the crown; below, the breast band is sooty grey and about $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide, not blue-grey and $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch wide as in the normal *P. m. mollis*; the belly, under tail coverts, throat and cheeks are all more or less heavily streaked and freckled with sooty grey; in normal *P. m. mollis* the under tail coverts are usually plain white or with very sparse grey freckling.

Distribution : Breeding at about 1,000ft. to 2,000ft. a.s.l. on the Goat Ridge, near the Settlement, Tristan da Cunha.

General : Nests found were burrows about 18 inches deep, usually beneath clumps of ferns. An egg taken on 28th December, 1951, measured 60 x 44mm. A chick examined on 13th February, 1951, was covered in thick grey down, very slightly paler on the breast and sparser and much whiter about the throat and cheeks; differs only in being slightly darker from a rather larger chick attributed to *P. m. mollis* found on Gough Island on 24th February, 1952.